

Congressman Dan Bishop Statement for the Record

Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples

Hearing on H.R. 1964 – *Lumbee Recognition Act*

December 4, 2019

I want to thank Chairman Gallego and Ranking Member Cook for holding this important hearing today. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 1964, the *Lumbee Recognition Act* and I applaud Representatives Butterfield and Hudson for introducing this important legislation.

The time is long past for the Lumbee tribe to enjoy full recognition under federal law. The Lumbee trace their roots in North Carolina all the way back to 1725. While the federal government recognized the tribe in part in 1956, the Lumbee remain excluded from the federal benefits and legal status enjoyed by all other federally recognized tribes – the most important of these benefits being the right to self-government and tribal sovereignty. No other tribe recognized by the federal government is denied the full benefits that come with that recognition. It is fundamentally unfair that the Lumbee are singled out for this wrongful treatment.

As the representative of North Carolina's 9th congressional district, I am proud to count all 55,000 members of the Lumbee Tribe as my constituents. As a State Senator, I sponsored legislation to clarify the status of the Lumbee as a state recognized tribe under North Carolina law. The first bill I cosponsored as a Member of Congress is the bill before the committee today. The *Lumbee Recognition Act* would provide the full recognition to which the Lumbee are entitled and at long last meet our nation's obligation to those good and decent people. I urge all members of this committee to support its passage.